



United States Department of the Interior

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Instruction Memorandum No. CA-2009-026
Expires: 09/30/2010

To: All District Managers and Field Managers

From: State Director

Subject: Survey Protocols Required for NEPA and ESA Compliance for BLM Special Status Plant Species

Purpose: The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to provide guidance on the requirements for conducting special status plant species surveys/inventories for ground disturbing projects. Inventories are conducted for many reasons; however, for the purpose of this document only one inventory "reason" is addressed:

To ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act by having sufficient information available to adequately assess the effects of proposed actions on special status plants. Assessments of the effects of these actions are documented in biological assessments, if the project involves Federally listed species.

Background: In 1996 the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) California State Director signed the Special Status Plant Management Handbook 6840-1. This Handbook details survey and inventory protocols required by BLM CA. This IM and attached protocols supersede that section of the 6840-1 Handbook.

Policy: It is BLM policy to conduct inventories/surveys to determine the occurrence and status of all special status plant species on lands managed by BLM or affected by BLM actions. This includes proactive inventories directed toward developing plans or determining the status of plant species, as well as inventories conducted to determine the impacts of BLM planned or authorized actions on any special status plants that might be within the area of a proposed project. Such inventories/surveys are to be conducted at the time of year when such plant species can be found and positively identified.

The survey/inventory requirements apply to energy rights-of-way applications on Federal lands managed by the BLM in California and northwestern Nevada. Projects that include State or private lands or require State approval will likely also require conformance with the rare plant survey guidelines of the California Department of Fish and Game

(<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/guideplt.pdf>).

For further information regarding this IM, please contact Christina Lund, State Botanist, at the California State Office, (916) 978-4638.

Signed by:
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Records Management

Attachment - 1
Survey Protocols Required for NEPA/ESA Compliance for BLM Special Status Plant
Species (7 pp)